IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the specification as follows:

Replace the fifth paragraph at page 10 with the following:

 a_3

HI CI IF IN A WELL THE

--When firing is carried out in an oxidizing atmosphere, metals that are not converted to oxides in the oxidizing atmosphere should preferably be used. To be more specific, one or two or more of Ag, Au, Pt, Rh, Ru, Ir, and Pd may be used, although Ag and Pd was well as Ag-Pd alloys are particularly preferred.--

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENTS

The amendment to the specification corrects a typographical error. The amendment to the claims and new Claim 5 corrects the improper multiple dependency of original Claim 4. New Claim 5 is supported by Claim 4 as originally filed. No new matter would be added by entry of these amendments.

NL7 ...

Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for examination on the merits. Early notification to this effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

Norman F. Oblon Attorney of Record Registration No. 24,618

Thomas A. Blinka, Ph.D. Registration No. 44,541

22850

(703) 413-3000

Fax #: (703) 413-2220

NFO/TAB/js

I:\atty\tab\200083US-PR.wpd